

Rock

# WHITE CITY

## Brings Retro-Punk To Sri Lanka

By Sarah Hannan

International acts come and go but it is for the first time the rock music circle is going to witness a Retro-Punk Band with a front-woman who plays bass guitar is hitting the stage this July 7th and 20th in Sri Lanka in Colombo and Kandy respectively. White City a band that was founded in Kabul, Afghanistan at present has three members and an alternating fourth member who performs as and when required. Ruth Owen being the front-woman is the vocalist, lyricist and bassist of the band, while Travis Beard plays guitars and Andreas Stefansson thrashes the drums. Archie is the on and off member who plays electronic loops and guitars for some of their performances. Speaking about the band and the tour Travis Beard joins IN today to relate the tale of White City (WC).

White City was put together in 2005-6 and was a covers-band with 11 members. It was not until 2008 Travis joined with the then member Archie, which the band started to write original scores. Ruth joined WC in 2009 and according to Travis, "there was an instant chemical reaction, an instant spark and we knew we had found a song writing equation that was worth exploring. On top of this at the time the music scene in Kabul was tiny, I mean there was 2 bands gigging around town, WC and Kyber Zoo, so it didn't take long for everyone to meet, it was just a matter of time".

Each member plays a role in creating the formula to their electrifying music and performance. While Ruth comes up with the lyrics all three of them compose the music. "It depends on which one of the 3 comes up with the initial idea, but we all get involved once that first idea is planted and we write the rest together. I think because we are a 3 piece we have a real raw sound and therefore we have to be more creative in our positions to make the sound different, otherwise we fall into the trap of having a really thin sound, unlike a 4-5 piece band".

WC was in Sri Lanka last December and Travis instantly fell in love with the country. "I saw a few gigs and the bands were of a high standard. The venues and equipment is a lot better than Afghanistan [not hard:-] and the crowd are small but very dedicated. We were very lucky to be invited in to the community through our friends in Paranoid Earthling and they have opened the doors to a community that is as passionate and hospitable as other music scenes I've seen around the world, but if not more! On my last trip there I spent a lot of time on a motorcycle travelling the country and I saw a lot of beautiful places, the people were so damn nice that I'm really excited to be coming back. I think it will be a great country to write our album in."

When asked as to what the Sri Lankan audience can expect from WC Travis explained that White City shows are always about High Energy. "We are not the best band in the world, we are not the worst, but we give it all on stage and you are guaranteed to have a good time and rock out with us. I am known to get lost in my effects pedals but when I'm not; I'll rock your socks off! We'll also bring a certain flavour of Afghanistan with us, not because we are Afghan, but because we made there and there is a special something in our sound that comes from being made in Afghanistan."

White City will be showcasing their talent and musicianship in Colombo on Sunday July 7 at R+B, Colombo (Anarchy United), and then on Saturday July 20 at Sampath Hall, Kandy (Rock Storm 2013).

Check what goes down in the White City lives at [www.whitecitykabul.com](http://www.whitecitykabul.com)

